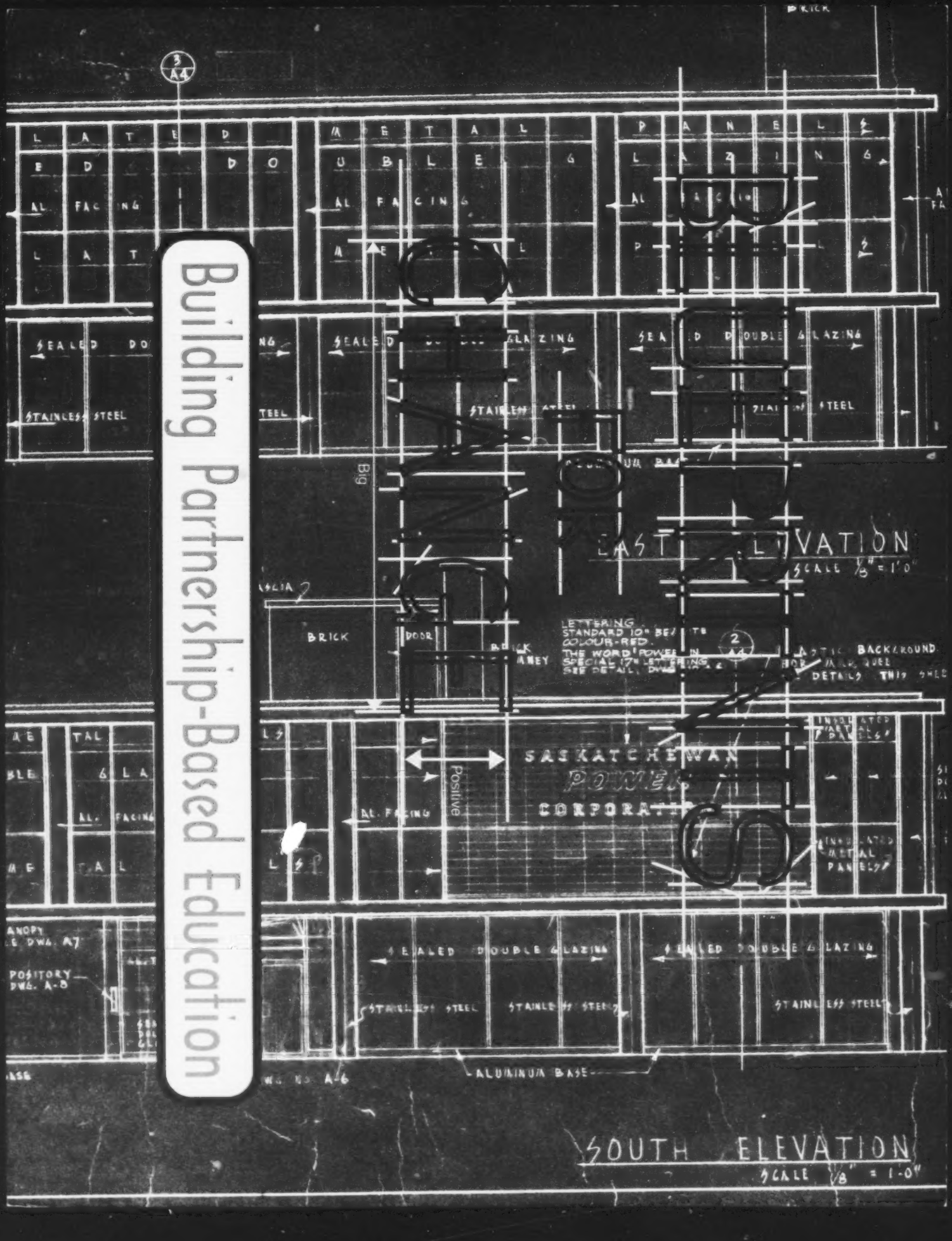
Building Partnership-Based Education
BRICK
METAL PANELLING
DOUBLE GLAZING
STAINLESS STEEL
ALUMINUM BASE
EAST ELEVATION
SCALE 1/8" = 1'0
BRICK
DOOR
LETTERING STANDARD 10" BE
COLOUR-RED.
THE WORD 'POWER' IN
SPECIAL 17" LETTERING
SEE DETAIL
ATTIC BACKGROUND
DETAILS THIS SHEET
SASKATCHEWAN
POWER
CORPORATION
Positive
AL. FACING
INSULATED METAL PANELS
ALUMINUM BASE
SOUTH ELEVATION
SCALE 1/8" = 1-0"

Nuts and Bolts

(a.k.a Table of Contents)

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"Thunderbird"
- Christine Kinequon, Saskatoon

DANGER
YOU MUST HAVE AN
OPEN MIND
TO ENTER THIS AREA
!CAUTION!
YOUTH AT WORK
Blueprints for Change

Why a Report on Education?

Youth spend a lot of their time in school - shouldn't it be a place where they feel supported and challenged?

We certainly think so - the youth we polled think so too!

We hope that by reading this report, you will become aware of some of the concerns facing Saskatchewan youth. We also hope that adults and youth alike across the province will listen seriously to the opinions of the youth represented in this report. If you are an adult decision-maker, we hope that you will keep these concerns in mind when creating or changing policy that will affect youth.

Education is a universal topic

Every youth in Saskatchewan has had some contact with the education system and can speak to their experiences. Some of the youth we surveyed described positive school experiences. Unfortunately, we also ran into some youth who described some not-so-positive experiences with the school system. This report is an outlet for ALL of the youth surveyed, regardless of their past.

Youth in Saskatchewan need a venue for expressing their opinions - not just on education, but on any topic of interest to them. In addition, the Government of Saskatchewan needs to pay attention to what youth are saying. However, meaningful change can only happen if youth and adults work together to create that change.

"Untitled"
- Brittany Nargang, Kindersley

"Untitled"
- Brittany Nargang, Kindersley

The topic of this report is timely due to the recent government release of the new School [illegible] model. Interestingly enough, the youth we surveyed identified education as being much more than "reading, writing and arithmetic" - support services, school environment, and extracurricular involvement were identified as key components to the educational process.

This is in keeping with the School [illegible] definition of schools "as centres of learning, support, and community for the children and families they serve" (School [illegible] - Spring 2003, Department of Learning).

So now that you know WHY we produced this report... here's HOW we did it!

The PYD met for a retreat weekend in Amyot Lake, SK in August of 2002 for some team-building activities and to plan for the upcoming year. We decided that our project for the 2002-2003 year would be to prepare a report outlining the opinions of Saskatchewan youth regarding the secondary education system. We elected an executive that would do the bulk of the work on the report throughout the year. The executive positions were as follows:

1. Layout Coordinators The Layout Coordinators (Danny Anderson & Jon Kohli) assisted the CAO in the design and layout of the Youth Report, compiled and chose the contents of the report, and communicated with the other members of the PYD on the progress of the report.

2. Artistic Director The Artistic Director (Kali Gordon) devised a strategy to gather art work and poetry from Saskatchewan youth, (and added some art of her own) assisted the Core Executive in choosing appropriate artwork for the report and consulted with the layout assistants regarding the "artistic direction" of the report.

3. Public Relations Officer The Public Relations Officer (Devin O'Neal) worked with the PYD to choose a release date for the report, contacted the media and other interested parties to inform them of the release of the report, and arranged opportunities for the PYD to present their findings to interested bodies.

4. Director of Research The Director of Research (Jessica McFarlane) helped to draft the initial survey, worked with the Core Executive to decide the contents of the Youth Report, assigned research projects to the rest of the PYD,collected information from the rest of the PYD, and assisted with the final editing of the Youth Report.

[For a more detailed account of "The Making of: *Blueprints for Change*" please contact the CAO]

We decided that a questionnaire would be the most effective way to poll Saskatchewan youth between the ages of 15 and 21. After analyzing the data from the returned questionnaires, we felt that the answers we received would serve as an excellent foundation for recommendations to decision-makers in the area of education.

271 SURVEYS WERE RETURNED!

We had an amazing response from a Regina high school who returned 183 surveys! For the purpose of the report we randomly chose 10% of the surveys from this particular school to include with the reported data.

Therefore, the data on the following page is based on 106 surveys.

Although the original questionnaire consisted of 17 questions, we clustered and rearranged the answers for the purpose of this report. Before presenting you with the statistics, we've provided a summary of the results and our rationale behind the questions we asked. We've also included comments from youth, and some of the poetry and artwork we've received. Finally, you will also see a number of recommendations at the end of each section - these recommendations directly address the concerns expressed by the youth we surveyed. Enjoy!

The data in this report was not collected in a strictly scientific manner - our purpose was not to provide a census of information taken from ALL youth in Saskatchewan, but rather to provide a sampling of the thoughts and opinions of some Saskatchewan youth!

"Noble Beast"
- Kali Gordon, Kindersley

Each youth that filled out and returned a survey got their name put into a draw to win a

FREE CD PLAYER!

The winner of the draw was:

Taliesin Tupper, from Luther College High School in Regina!

A COLLECTION OF RESULTS
FROM OUR CONSULTATIONS
WITH YOUNG PEOPLE
BREAKING
NEW
GROUND
7
Blueprints for Change.

WHO DID WE TALK TO?

"Purple Haze"
- Brigitt Blanchard, Saskatoon

We wanted to know a little bit about **WHO** we were surveying. As you can see, the responses we received came from a wide variety of Saskatchewan youth.

(Range – age 15 – age 21)

Average age = 17

Gender – 50% male
50% female

Location – 52% rural
48% urban

Of the 106 youth surveyed, **86%** of them are currently attending school! However, that means that **14%** of the youth surveyed had dropped out of school – we think that is too many. **WHY** did these youth drop out?

"I dropped out because I feel there is not much support for students" (17, Regina, female)

"They were teaching things that I would not use in practical life. It also seemed like most of the teachers didn't want to teach" (20, Estevan, male)

"I dropped out because I was not being smart about it – but I'm going back!" (16, Assiniboia, female)

"Curly"
- Kali Gordon, Kindersley

"Untitled"
- Sarah Dueck, Saskatoon

104-02323/

Some of these youth gave education another try - we wanted to know **WHY** they went back

I realized an education will open many doors in the future" (17, North Battleford, male)

"Because my education is very important to me" (16, Regina, female)

"I've returned a couple of times... I thought I would be okay but I felt uncomfortable." (17, Regina, female)

The above comments of youth indicate that schools are about much more than math and reading - the social aspect of schools is also important. This is consistent with the Department of Learning web page which states, www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/k/pecs/splus/index.htm (as of May 9, 2003) *"The role of the school has changed — schools today have two primary functions*

1. *to educate children and youth — nurturing the development of the whole child, intellectually, spiritually, socially, emotionally and physically and*
2. *to support service delivery — serving as centers at the community level for the delivery of appropriate social, health, recreation, culture, justice and other services for children and their families"*

Advice for Educators

1. SUPPORT! SUPPORT! SUPPORT!
   Don't forget about those students not excelling academically – don't let them fall through the cracks! These students need more support systems in place to make sure that they can graduate successfully!

"Untitled"
- Devlyn Mallette, Regina

Extra-curricular Activities

Who said that youth were couch potatoes? Certainly not us - especially after we discovered that **60%** of the 106 students we surveyed participated in extra-curricular activities! Here's a sample of what they do in their spare time!

Amnesty International
Cheerleading
Chess Club
Choir
Christian Club
Chums
Debate Club
Dorm Council
Drama
Environmental Club
Fly Higher
French Club
Grad Committee
Handbells
Jazz Band
Kids Help Phone
Kindersley Outdoor Adventure Club (KOAC)
Martial Arts
Meals on Wheels
Multicultural Youth Group
Mural Committee
Musical
Newspaper Club
Peer Support
Sports
Students Against Drinking & Driving (SADD)
Student Ambassadors
Student Representative Council(SRC)
Volunteens
Yearbook Club

"Dream Vision"
- Terry Whitehead, Saskatoon

What also interested us was **WHY** these students participated

"They're fun and beneficial to both me and the school" (16, Cut Knife, female)

"As a new student, I felt that I wanted a new and exciting way to meet people" (16, Regina, female)

"Now is the time to learn and to be involved in as many things as possible - that is what being a kid is for" (15, Regina, male)

"I became involved because I enjoy the discipline they give and they keep me in shape" (15, Regina, female)

"I enjoy these activities - also teaches me how to be responsible" (17, Kindersley, male)

"I feel like I can make a positive impact on the community and learn about myself" (17, North Battleford, male)

"I became involved to have fun, to compete, to stay fit and to meet new people" (16, Cut Knife, female)

"I like to be involved with helping others. I enjoy meeting new people and getting to know them well" (17. Kindersley. female)

"Innocence"
- Kali Gordon, Kindersley

However, students can face several challenges when trying to get involved. Social pressures, (ie. unfair stereotyping, pressure from cliques, and teacher's favouritism) keep some students from participating in activities. Some see try-outs, cuts and the certain academic levels necessary to engage in an activity as barriers. Others are just too busy, between schoolwork, housework, jobs and other activities, to do everything they would like to do! Some barriers

"Transportation... because I live on a farm" (15, Cut Knife, male)

"Lack of information to the students about what's available" (21, North Battleford, male)

"I work two jobs on top of this so sometimes my social life is limited"
(17, Kindersley, female)

"YOU NEED TO GET A CERTAIN AVERAGE ACADEMICALLY TO PARTICIPATE"
(15, REGINA, FEMALE)

"Lack of time due to overload of work"
(16, Regina, female)

"It tends to be the more popular kids who are selected for teams" (17, Estevan, female)

"Mostly social barriers as in certain clubs and activities have a negative image or are unfairly stereotyped"
(17, North Battleford, male)

Conflicts, there is always strong commitment for our basketball team which sometimes have games/practices when I have other things on" (16, Regina, male)

"It's intimidating to do it alone"
(16, Midale, male)

Advice for Educators

2. Develop more recreational sports leagues in schools that do not require youth to "make the cut" – put the focus on having fun and building team morale as opposed to winning!
3. Businesses need to create unique vocational and educational opportunities for students to provide them with applicable skills for the workplace (i.e., mentorship, job shadowing, entrepreneurship).

SUPPORTS

We know that every school is different and one of the major differences usually lies in the types of support services that students have at their disposal. So we decided to ask the youth we surveyed what services were available in their schools.

Aboriginal Liaison Worker	Day Care	Sports
Addictions Counselling	Debate Teams	Students Against Drinking & Driving (SADD)
Chess Club	Drama	Student Representative Council (SRC)
Choir	Kids Help Phone	Suicide Prevention
Christian Club	Nurse	Teen Wellness Centre
Counselling	Peer Support	Yearbook

However, the youth we surveyed still feel as though some services are missing. They suggested adding a more involved peer support group, band programs, recreational hockey teams, or a full-time psychologist. Students want a greater VARIETY of support services and extra-curricular activities! They also want to see present services expanded to include addictions and abuse counselling as well as the inclusion of both male and female counsellors.

"More teachers and counsellors that are truly committed to the youth" (18, Regina, male)

"Female counsellors — not just male!" (17, Regina, Female)

"A support group consisting of teachers that helps students with careers and university decisions" (17, Regina, female)

"Groups that help kids stop bad habits (i.e., smoking, drinking)" (17, Regina, female)

"SUPPORT FOR FOREIGN STUDENTS" (18, REGINA, FEMALE)

"More student exchanges or study abroad programs" (21, North Battleford, male)

"More career counselling, and apprenticeship/work experience, volunteer opportunities" (17, North Battleford, male)

"Clay Aikens"
- Chelsea Cyr, Prince Albert

I Wish

I wish that you could understand
No matter what I'll hold your hand
I wish that you could only see
That in my heart you'll always be
I wish that when you look at me
That you would say that you love me
I wish no matter where you are
That I will be your shining star
I wish that when we are apart
I will always be in your heart
I wish that you could love me for me
And not for what you think or see
I wish that you will always keep me near
And always fight away my fear
I wish I knew how you really feel
So I could know if you're for real
I wish you knew no matter who
That I will never stop loving you.

- Pearl Gardiner, Prince Albert

Small schools, big schools what is better? This is what we found out

		Large School	Small School
Positives	+'s	- more classes offered - central location - more people to meet - more extra-curricular activities - more services	- you know everyone! - more one on one attention from teachers and administrators
Negatives	-'s	- services are not as accessible or as personal	- less opportunities (for extra-curricular activities, class options) - know everyone else's business (GOSSIP) - not getting to meet and connect with a wide variety of people

Class size is also a pet peeve of many students we surveyed - classes are too big! The average class size of the 106 youth we talked to was 26 students (with a range from 10 to 40!) So we asked the youth we surveyed what they feel is an appropriate class size

less than 20 – **23%**

20 – 25 – **48%**

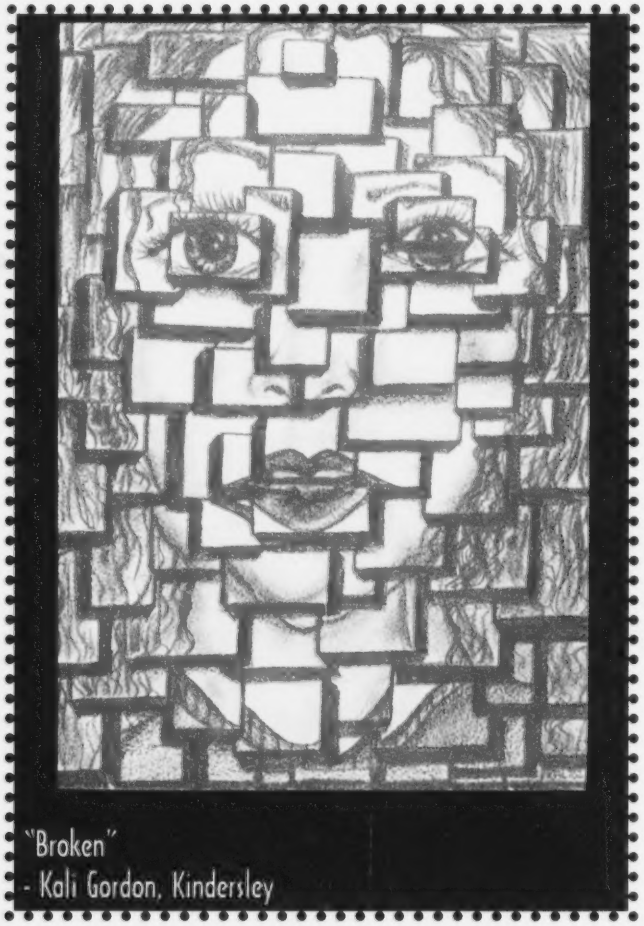
25 – 30 – **19%**

more than 30 - **10%**

Advice to Educators

4. Equal opportunities for schools! (Even if that means sharing resources between schools)
   a. increase availability of guidance counsellors and addictions services with attention given to equal gender representation.
5. Schools need to utilize community resources, including businesses, to increase the variety of available course options and extra-curricular activities for students.
6. Increase post-secondary education preparation
   a. give support to students not excelling academically
   b. provide students with ALL their post-secondary options – not everyone wants to go to university!
7. Provide problem resolution training to students to alleviate the added stress on teachers.

R-E-S-P-E-C-T



"Broken"
- Kali Gordon, Kindersley

We feel that respect is a two-way street - not only do students need to show respect to their teachers, but teachers and administrators also need to return that respect to their students. One way to show respect is to allow people to participate in making decisions that will affect them.

Some good news
63% of the 106 youth surveyed felt respected by their teachers and administrators!

"If you talk to a teacher about something you feel should be changed then your opinion is taken into consideration. We also have a TV show (High School Confidential) which helps get teens' opinions out to the public" (15, Saskatoon, female)

But
That also means that almost **40%** of the 106 youth surveyed did not feel that their opinions were respected. That's a pretty high number. **WHY** don't they feel respected?

"Some teachers are **amazing** at respecting what I believe but others just don't acknowledge it" (16, Regina, female)

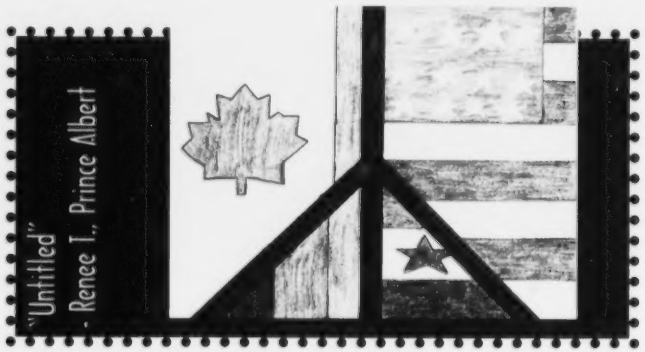
"Even though I'm the SRC Ring (President) at my school my ideas are still seen as childish and useless" (17, North Battleford, male)

Do students feel that they have a voice in the school system? Most of the students we surveyed saw the SRC (Student Representative Council) as the primary (if not only) way of voicing their opinions. Although some of the youth believed their school council worked well, others were skeptical of the effectiveness of SRC's

"SRC, but the POWER to make valuable decisions and to represent your peers is not recognized" (17, North Battleford, male)

"SRC is good but only a small group of semi-popular people get any say in anything and don't have much power anyway" (16, Regina, female)

"We don't really have anything to help make education decisions. We don't have a school board rep and all our SRC does is plan fun days" (17, Estevan, female)



So, if students have a complaint with the school system that can't be facilitated by the SRC, what happens? About **40%** of the 106 youth we surveyed had raised complaints with teachers - following their complaints, some students claim success and positive change, while others say they were not taken seriously or were ignored

"My teacher was not teaching thoroughly – we didn't learn half of the things in the course. The principal told me to **tough it out**." (17, Kindersley, female)

"They took my concern as rebellion when I only wanted to ~~HELP~~. I think that teachers/principals should respect student's opinions more." (16, Regina, female)

"The outcome was that the student lost (as always)" (16, Kindersley, male)

Advice for Educators

8. Consult youth in matters that affect them!
   (i.e.) a student advisory council could be set up when a new school is being built
9. Create an body independent of the school system where students can voice their concerns. Students need a clear accessible and anonymous process to raise issues free from retaliation.

THE SCHOOL BOARD

Every school in Saskatchewan is governed by an elected school board - but what does a public school board do?

The School Board is responsible for making all of the administrative decisions for schools in their areas. For example, they:

- **employ teachers and administrators**
- **approve textbooks and other learning resource material and teacher references**
- **grant leave of absence to teachers and other employees of the board of education**
- **provide scholarships, bursaries, or similar awards for the purposes of the attendance of teachers and pupils at post-secondary institutions**
- **close the school or discontinue one or more grades or years taught in the school**

(Education Act, 1995, www.sasked.gov.sk.ca)

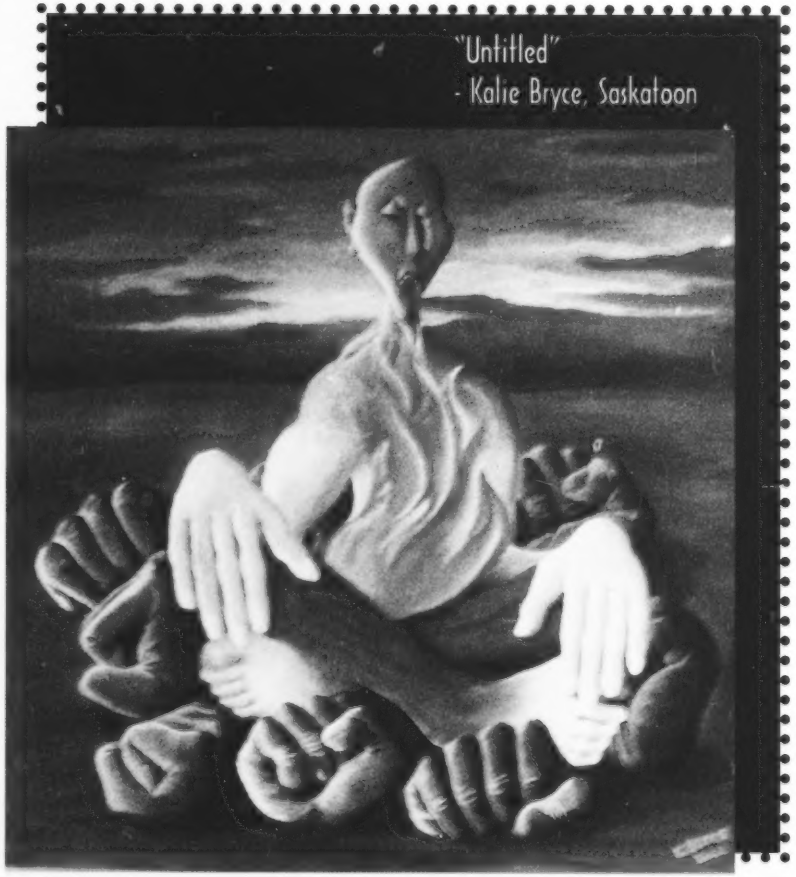
"I have no idea what the school board does" (17, Kindersley, Female)

71% of the 106 youth we surveyed had no idea what the school board was responsible for or whether the school board was adequately representing their concerns!

"They make rules, promise them to us, and then break them" (16, Kindersley, male)

"They do not interact with students and we only hear of their mistakes" (17, North Battleford, male)

"I think they do a **fine job of representing our school** and helping us to do different things" (17, Kindersley, female)



"Untitled"
- C.J., Saskatoon

We wanted to know whether a student position on the school board would help students feel more involved and informed in decision-making about their education

While some students believe that youth are not experienced enough to make decisions about their own education, or that they would not be interested in a school board position, **86%** of the 106 youth we surveyed thought a student position would be a fantastic idea!

"Students know what students need more than adults" (16, Coleville, male)

"Just because we have separate views, we should still be heard" (15, Regina, female)

"Yes, but only if it is the "right" person – it's a good idea for us to be represented but only if the reps are mature and serious about being a rep" (16, Cut Knife, female)

"Because having a student rep would be one step closer to a better relationship between youth and adults" (15, Regina, female)

"We need our voice to be heard! The school board doesn't know the school like the students do and therefore cannot adequately represent us." (17, Estevan, female)

"Maybe more than one student because I would feel better about confronting an adult in that situation" (16, Regina, female)

Advice for Educators

10. Increase awareness within schools of the role of the school board
    a. more interaction between trustees and students
    b. mutual communication between SRC's and school boards
11. Amend the Education Act to:
    a. include a youth representative on the board and/or
    b. create a youth advisory body to which the board is accountable

School Environment

School environment can have a huge impact on a young person's ability to learn Following the school shootings in both Taber, AB and Columbine, all of us felt a little less safe in our schools But now that the wave of highly publicized school shootings has died down, the PYD wanted to know if school safety, personal privacy, and discrimination were still prominent issues in Saskatchewan schools

Although a few of the 106 students voiced their concern about violence (i e bomb threats, stabbings, gang-related tensions) an overwhelming majority - **86%** - felt safe in their schools

"I do feel safe in my school. Everyone is friendly and you just feel like you belong, even when you're new." (15, Regina, female)

"We've had a gun bomb threat... knives found in the bathroom and a stabbing" (17, Kindersley, female)

"There is just such a friendly and positive environment that there is no need to feel uncomfortable or scared" (15, Regina, female)

"Teachers are always accessible if anything arises and we have a lot of supervisors present" (15, Saskatoon, female)

67% of the 106 students surveyed felt their privacy was respected by teachers, administrators and other students The **33%** who did not feel their privacy was respected, cited gossip and locker searches as the primary examples of privacy violations

"Untitled"
- Frank C., Saskatoon

"I have had friends experience teacher intrusion into their personal lives." (17, Cut Knife, female)

Because of recent theft and vandalism, our school has added a lot of cameras to scare people" (17, North Battleford, male)

"I believe I'm respected because I'm always happy and I treat everyone equally and put them before myself – I think the respect I get in return is my payback" (16, Cut Knife, female)

"I do feel that my privacy is respected – we are allowed to share personal info but don't have to" (15, Regina, female)

"Wolf"
- Blain Whitehead, Saskatoon

Unfortunately, discrimination still exists in Saskatchewan school systems. Although **42%** of the 106 students surveyed felt their school was discrimination-free, the remaining **58%** were able to give various examples of discrimination in their schools. Some students cited discrimination by staff, which was usually based on academic performance, athletic ability, appearance and sometimes gender. Other students saw discrimination as perpetrated by their peers, which was usually based on either age, popularity or racial origin. In addition, many respondents observed racist remarks and verbal abuse directed towards students of First Nations origin.

Many students in grade 11 and 12 discriminate against Natives by calling them racist names and do imitations of pow-wows." (16, Regina, male)

"Authority figures are always pointing me out because of how I am and look - I think they are racist too because they are always saying you Indians should look at your problems and help them, don't support them." (19, Regina, male)

" The popular people by ignoring or picking on/harassing the less popular kids" (19, Estevan, male)

"There is always discrimination somewhere - mostly the older kids with attitude toward the younger students" (18, Saskatoon, female)

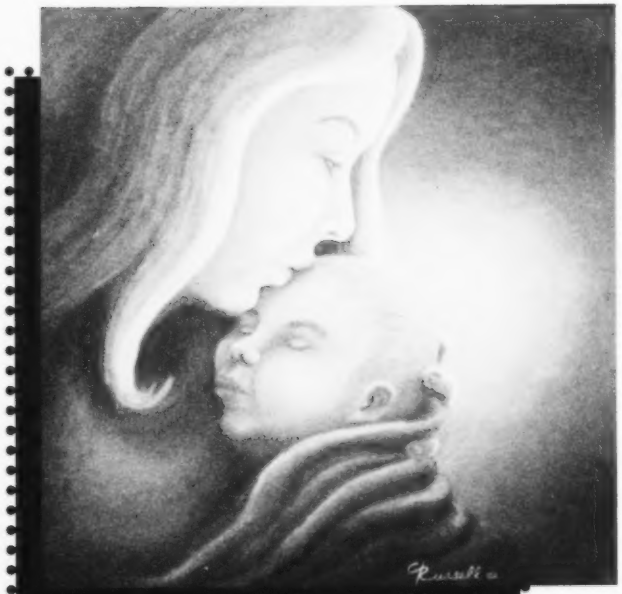
"RACIAL DISCRIMINATION – OFTEN OTHER STUDENTS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES OR DIFFERENT RACES ARE EXCLUDED" (17, REGINA, MALE)

Advice to Educators

12. Schools need to put more emphasis on multiculturalism (i.e.) host anti-racism events or have cultural fairs!
13. Ensure that students enter high school with greater cultural sensitivity and experience
    a. put emphasis on multicultural programming at the elementary level
    b. introduce Native Studies classes into the elementary curriculum
14. Implement school/teacher evaluations by students. The issues raised by the students should be carefully considered by the school (i.e.) create a youth/adult advisory council for your school to help deal with the issues raised by students.

Youth Voice

We know that a large focus of this report has been on what needs to be changed in the education system, but the PYD also discovered that there were lots of things that youth liked about their schools!



"Untitled"
- Crystal Russel, Saskatoon

"The excellent quality of education." (16, Regina, female)

"I like the spirit and the way teachers try to help you and offer times to be visited and do give help - that is very important." (17, Regina, female)

"I also like how staff and students can socialize and get along so well." (17, Kindersley, female)

"The renovations made our school a brighter and more cheerful place to be — friends are always something to look forward to." (17, Kindersley, female)

So, what would youth change about the education system if they had the chance? Here's just a sample of their ideas

"No departmentals where they curve your marks up and down - people are NOT getting the marks they deserve !" (17, Kindersley, female)

"More one on one help." (17, Kindersley, female)

"Students need to have a stronger voice in the system" (18, Regina, female)

"More knowledge of the way our studies are applied to real life." (17, Regina, female)

"Better career enrolment programs." (20, Estevan, male)

"To start school later, like 9:00am... it's a known fact that kids learn more during the times of 10:00am to 6:00pm!" (17, Regina, female)

"Less large assignments and more daily's... you learn a lot more doing things over a period of time rather than all at once." (16, Regina, male)

More suggestions for change

"MORE CLASSES, MORE OPTIONS OPEN TO STUDENTS... (I.E., ANIMATION)." (18, MARQUIS, MALE)

"Let us (students) be heard - let our opinions be respected." (15, Regina, female)

"That we would offer a mechanical or automotive class. Or even a carpentry class." (17, Regina, male)

"More integration between school and the community." (21, North Battleford, male)

"Untitled"
- C.J., Saskatoon

Advice for the Children's Advocate Office

15. That the Children's Advocate Office bring forward the recommendations contained in this report to the appropriate provincial government departments or agencies .

The PYD was also interested in finding out about other interests of Saskatchewan youth. We found that students have an interest in everything - from elimination of drug and alcohol abuse, to world politics!

"Community oriented events – get the whole community involved with events in the school." (21, Sweetgrass, male)

"Drugs and someone to talk to about them... counselling from someone their own age." (20, Estevan, male)

"Work opportunity and (for those in the rural communities) ways to keep amused/what to do in spare time that's not illegal or health damaging." (15, Regina, male)

"There are no youth prices at movie theatres! If we have to pay the adult price we should be treated like adults!" (15, Regina, female)

"I believe the education budget should increase." (17, Cut Knife, female)

THE CONTRACTORS

The Provincial Youth Delegation (PYD)

The PYD was founded in 1998 and is an initiative of the Children's Advocate Office (CAO). We are made up of youth between the ages of 15 and 21 who come from all over Saskatchewan. We do our best to represent our peers from across the province as we make recommendations to government on youth-related issues. We believe that youth have a valuable voice and should have opportunities to express their opinions.

Between these pages is not a "Report" in the traditional sense. *Blueprints for Change* is more importantly a compilation of stories, art and opinions from youth across Saskatchewan. It is my hope that by engaging these youth the Provincial Youth Delegation, in partnership with the Children's Advocate Office, added more voices to the future evolution of education and helped, in some way, to include the people who make it work, the youth. We have become the messenger of the experiences and opinions of some Saskatchewan youth; this is their voice and their dreams materialized into a "Blueprint" for an education system in Saskatchewan based upon mutual respect and positive partnerships.

It is my hope that the people who read this report will see that the views of youth are valid and worthwhile. I hope that they agree that the future must include a spot for youth as partners, as decision-makers, and as the most important resource that our province has to offer. If the youth who participated by providing their opinions or input felt empowered, or if we re-affirm to the adults who read this that the opinions of youth are important to include in decisions which affect them, then I will be satisfied that it has served it's purpose. What is my wish, though, is that youth and adults alike can use this report as proof that the dreams, desires and vision of youth, reflect and compliment the views of adults. Through including youth, one is not including a contrasting opinion, but rather expanding the common vision to a better, happier future for everyone.

It has been my pleasure to be a part of PYD during this important and sometimes daunting task. I have been inspired by the youth I worked with, and encouraged by the adults, in the CAO and other organizations, who have leant their expertise and assistance along the way. I am proud of the document that we have produced, but perhaps more importantly, the process of creating it has born the first of what I hope is many partnerships between adults and youth toward a common good and a brighter future.

Devin O'Neal Chair, PYD

Respect is a vital component to any healthy relationship. With this in mind, the PYD embarked on a navigational journey to assess the climate of education in this province from the eyes of its biggest consumers, youth. Respect for students, respect for educators and respect for the communities who foster the schools within them, all play an integral part in this document. All these aspects must be in line in order to achieve an optimal environment for all involved.

It has been an honour, and a great privilege for me to have been involved with the PYD throughout Mind the Gap, the discoveries and strides that have been made in its wake, and now our continued ability to connect with the youth of our province, and to provide an avenue for their voices in this report.

I would like to thank all delegation members, and CAO staff for their hard work and effort to produce this report. Even more so, I would like to especially thank all the youth who let us be the messengers of their voices, both within these pages, and throughout the anticipated response to this document. I believe that educators, students, and the community alike need to work together to begin to achieve the goals set out by *Blueprints for Change*.

Thank you for your interest and commitment to the educational environment of Saskatchewan. I hope this document begins a journey of reflection and positive change within everyone who reads it.

Melissa Cotton Past-Chair, PYD

For more information on the CAO and the PYD please visit the Children's Advocate Office web-site at: www.saskcao.ca.

The Children's Advocate Office (CAO)

The CAO promotes the interests of, and acts as a voice for, children who have concerns about provincial government services. The CAO engages in public education, works to resolve disputes and conducts independent investigations. The CAO also recommends improvements of programs for children to the government and/or the Legislative Assembly. Anyone can contact the CAO if they have a concern about a child or a group of children receiving services from a provincial department or agency.

Schools are centres of learning and support is the key message of the government of Saskatchewan School^{PLUS} model. As School^{PLUS} is implemented, it will be important for all of us to have a comprehensive understanding of its vision and to contribute our voices and actions to ensure successful outcomes. *Blueprints for Change*, is an important step in this process.

The views of children and youth need to be taken into account in all decisions affecting their lives. Children and youth must be encouraged to voice their concerns through an appropriate and constructive processes. Student and parent involvement in the development of policies is critical to successful implementation of any education program. Processes and policies need to ensure that students and parents have a right to be listened to respectfully and fully included in decision-making and program planning. Administrators and staff require a clear mandate to develop ways of consulting with students, parents and communities. The onus is on school boards and staff to shift the public perception of schools as hierarchical and closed, with all decisions coming down from the top level to one that is more inclusive and open.

Therefore, in response to recommendation 15 of this report and in accordance with *The Ombudsman and Children's Act*, I will be writing to the Minister of Learning to recommend that the government of Saskatchewan accept, implement and provide a formal response, to the recommendations of the Provincial Youth Delegation in this report, *Blueprints for Change*. However, the recommendations in this report are not the sole responsibility of the Department of Learning. All government departments responsible for children's services, combined with community-based resources, need to work together to build an education system that really works.

It has truly been an honor and a great privilege for me to be involved with the members of the PYD. Their dedication and conviction to bring forward the voices of Saskatchewan youth is remarkable. The recommendations and comments of the youth are constructive, thoughtful and significant. I urge government and community leaders to listen to the voices of our youth.

Deborah Parker-Loewen, Ph.D. Children's Advocate

"Untitled"
- C.J., Saskatoon

Our Final Message

"So often, reports go unnoticed after their release – we do not want this report to become a dust collector on your bookshelf! All of the recommendations in this report could be accomplished with a little time, effort and money. Please listen to the voices of the youth in this report and seriously consider how their comments affect your day-to-day work. ***Blueprints for Change*** is proof that Saskatchewan youth are articulate and knowledgeable. I hope this report inspired you to begin working toward change in Saskatchewan's secondary education system."

- Amanda Doucette

"Child participation is a significant issue not just in Canada but all over the world. It is easy enough to sit a young person in an important meeting, but is their presence really meaningful? I think that is the issue that gets overlocked. It is important for children to participate in things that affect them, for their views, perspectives and opinions will be of huge importance to anything that is organised for children. Children possess high potential, yet at times that potential is stored away - by involving youth - you can help them grow into healthy adults."

- Candis Clarke

We would like this report to be considered as the foundation for youth/adult partnerships in Saskatchewan's education system. Both youth and adults must recognize the importance of these recommendations and implement them to foster a more positive school environment.

"There are as many styles of learning as there are of teaching. It is important for teachers to remember and respect that. I think that smaller class sizes and more teacher assistance would give teachers more ability to respond to student needs and challenge students appropriately."

- Danny Anderson

"Having experienced rural, urban and integrated services schools, I have learned that EVERY school is run differently. I see things that work and things that don't. From the perspective of a student, I'm a bit of a pro. ***Blueprints for Change*** will help both students and staff build towards the future. I am looking forward to seeing schools take this report and begin to go "under construction."

- Jessica McFarlane

"The process of creating a better education system is not a relay-race, but a marathon. We youth are not just passing the baton to adults and expecting them to finish the race. We want to be involved in every step and every decision. Improving the education system will take a lot of time and energy, but the strengths and abilities of both youth and adults will allow us to finish this marathon in record time."

- Jon Kohli

"Education is the most fundamental principle for evoking change in our society. Therefore, we must do everything in our power to ensure that we are more than adequately meeting the needs of both our students and educators to develop our future generations of citizens to their fullest possible potential."

- Christina Benzing

"I truly believe there is a brilliant child locked inside of every student. The key to unlocking this brilliance is education."

- Kali Gordon

"From my experience in the PYD, I have witnessed the power that youth in our province possess and the potential that exists in creating change. The PYD has been a vehicle for youth to channel their concerns and protests."

- Jennifer Wright

"Education is a community responsibility and its successes and limitations affect all people. This *Blueprints For Change* is a plan for co-operation between children and adults alike to be pro-active in building a more positive future through being partners in education."

- Devin O'Neal

"Educators and students alike have great potential to benefit from the recommendations within this report. In an ever-evolving educational environment, we must go to great lengths to ensure a positive experience is had by all. If all parties involved put forth a positive effort, great things can happen. Education is a lifelong process. It is never too early or too late to adjust and improve our thoughts and actions."

- Melissa Cotton

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A-3

Our Inspiration...

THE WORK OF THE YOUTH PARTICIPANTS AT THE *MIND THE GAP - YOUTH/ADULT PARTNERSHIPS* CONFERENCE

In November of 2000, the Provincial Youth Delegation (PYD), the Children's Advocate Office (CAO), the Saskatchewan Council on Children and the Saskchewan Action Plan for Children Steering Committee, with additional support from the the Saskatoon Action Circle on Youth Sexuality, hosted the *Mind the Gap - Youth/Adult Partnerships* conference in Bruno, Saskatchewan. The conference participants produced a series of recommendations to government which fell under seven broad themes:

"Untitled"
- C.J., Saskatoon

(1) The media
(2) Inaccurate assumptions of youth
(3) Making decisions
(4) Tokenism and logistics of youth representation
(5) Youth sexual health/ill health
(6) Involving youth at risk
(7) Youth leadership/skills development

Although the above themes may not be visibly present in *Blueprints for Change*, all seven themes showed up in the responses from the youth we surveyed. This is another example of the all-encompassing nature of our modern day school systems!

(For a copy of the "Mind the Gap" Final Report, please contact the CAO or visit our web-site www.saskcao.ca for a pdf version)

Mind the Gap

The Recommendations

1. SUPPORT! SUPPORT! SUPPORT!
   Don't forget about those students not excelling academically – don't let them fall through the cracks! These students need more support systems in place to make sure that they can graduate successfully.

2. Develop more recreational sports leagues in schools that do not require youth to "make the cut" – put the focus on having fun and building team morale as opposed to winning!

3. Businesses need to create unique vocational and educational opportunities for students to provide them with applicable skills for the workplace (i.e., mentorship, job shadowing, entrepreneurship).

4. Equal opportunities for schools! (Even if that means sharing resources between schools)
   a. Increase availability of guidance counsellors and addictions services with attention given to equal gender representation

5. Schools need to utilize community resources, including businesses, to increase the variety of available course options and extra-curricular activities for students.

6. Increase post-secondary education preparation
   a. Give support to students not excelling academically
   b. Provide students with ALL their post-secondary options because not everyone wants to go to university!

7. Provide problem resolution training to students to alleviate the added stress on teachers

8. Consult youth in matters that affect them! (i.e., a student advisory council could be set up when a new school is being built).

9. Create an body independent of the school system where students can voice their concerns
   a. students need a clear accessible and anonymous process to raise issues free from retaliation.

10. Increase awareness within schools of the role of the school board
    a. More interaction between trustees and students
    b. Mutual communication between SRC's and school boards

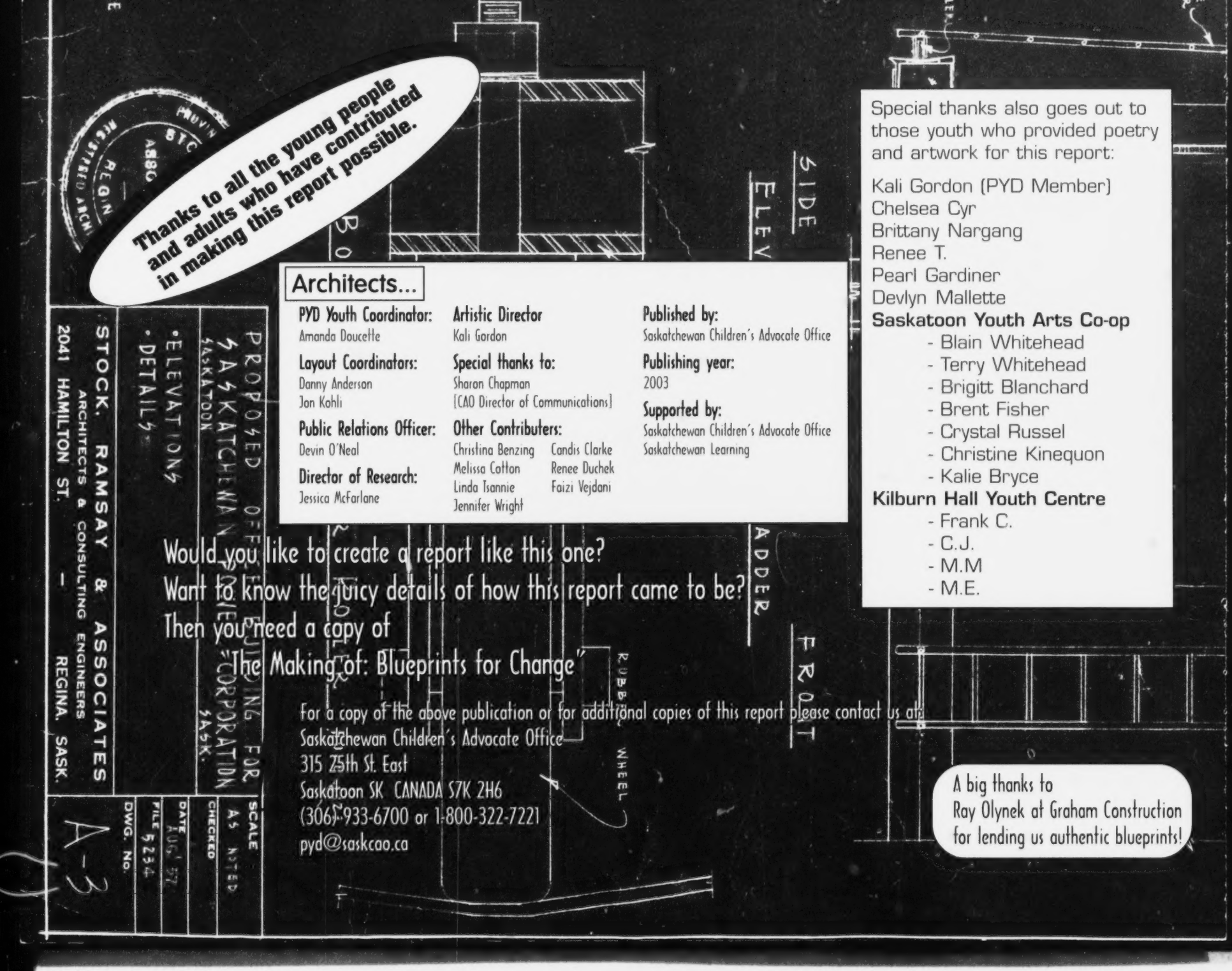
11. Amend the Education Act to:
    a. Include a youth representative on the board and/or
    b. Create a youth advisory body to which the board is accountable

12. Schools need to put more emphasis on multiculturalism
    (i.e.) host anti-racism events or have cultural fairs!

13. Ensure that students enter high school with greater cultural sensitivity and experience
    a. Put emphasis on multicultural programming at the elementary level
    b. Introduce Native Studies classes into the elementary curriculum

14. Implement school/teacher evaluations by students. The issues raised by the students should be carefully considered by the school (i.e., create a youth/adult advisory council for your school to help deal with the issues raised)

15. That the Children's Advocate Office bring forward the recommendations contained in this report to the appropriate provincial government departments or agencies .



Thanks to all the young people and adults who have contributed in making this report possible.

Special thanks also goes out to those youth who provided poetry and artwork for this report:

Kali Gordon (PYD Member)
Chelsea Cyr
Brittany Nargang
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Pearl Gardiner
Devlyn Mallette

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- Brigitt Blanchard
- Brent Fisher
- Crystal Russel
- Christine Kinequon
- Kalie Bryce

Kilburn Hall Youth Centre
- Frank C.
- C.J.
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Would you like to create a report like this one?
Want to know the juicy details of how this report came to be?
Then you need a copy of
"The Making of: Blueprints for Change"

For a copy of the above publication or for additional copies of this report please contact us at:
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A big thanks to
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The Making of...

Blueprints for Change:
Building Partnership-Based Education

PYD
provincial
Youth
delegation
saskatchewan

November 2003

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PYD saskatchewan provincial Youth delegation **is an initiative of** The Saskatchewan Children's Advocate Office

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Foreword

The Provincial Youth Delegation (PYD), an initiative of the Saskatchewan Children's Advocate Office (CAO), is a youth advisory body that was founded in 1998. We are made up of youth between the ages of 15 and 21 who come from all over Saskatchewan. In addition, a Youth Coordinator, Amanda Doucette, works out of the CAO assisting the PYD in their activities and events. We do our best to represent our peers from across the province as we make recommendations to government on youth-related issues. We believe that youth have a valuable voice and should have opportunities to express their opinions. The PYD has been involved in numerous projects over the years including the highly successful *Mind the Gap – Youth/Adult Partnerships* conference of 2000 and various other conferences, boards, and councils both in and out of province.

The PYD met for a retreat weekend in August of 2002 for some team-building activities and to plan for the upcoming year. The group decided that their project for the 2002-2003 year would be to prepare a report outlining the opinions of Saskatchewan youth regarding the secondary education system (*Blueprints for Change: Building Partnership-based Education*). We spent a year gathering and analyzing data and publishing the report. Along with *Blueprints for Change*, we decided to produce this handbook to highlight the successes of our project and to give other interested youth groups some insight into what we learned about writing and producing a report.

If after reading this handbook you still have more questions, please give us a call! Also, additional copies of both *Blueprints for Change* and this handbook can be obtained by contacting our office [see the previous page for the contact information] or on the CAO website at www.saskcao.ca.

Why a Report? And... Why a Report on Education?

The *Mind the Gap* conference was a huge milestone in the journey of youth/adult partnerships in Saskatchewan – from this conference, a report was published outlining the major barriers to youth involvement. Both the PYD and the CAO were very committed to making sure that the recommendations from *Mind the Gap* were recognized by the Saskatchewan government. Finally, after two years of lobbying, we received a written response to the recommendations from the Department of Culture, Youth and Recreation.

Even though we had received a formal response to the recommendations from *Mind the Gap*, the PYD still felt that they should continue to spread the word about the conference.

The idea of putting together a youth report came to fruition at the PYD Annual Meeting 2002. One of the main recommendations coming out of *Mind the Gap* was to give youth a valuable voice within government and their community. We felt a youth report could speak to the voices of countless youth. We chose to focus on the topic of education because every youth in Saskatchewan has had some contact with the education system and can speak about their experiences. Although there was no specific section in *Mind the Gap* dealing with the education system, many of the issues raised in that report have relevance within the school system (i.e., Inaccurate assumptions of youth, Youth sexual health/ill health, Involving youth at risk, and Youth Leadership/Skills Development.)

Once the topic for the PYD Youth Report was chosen, the PYD then elected an executive to carry out the bulk of the work for the report. Here were the duties of the executive in a nutshell:

1. ***Layout Coordinators (Danny Anderson and Jon Kohli):*** Danny and Jon assisted the CAO in the design and layout of the Youth Report, compiled and chose the contents of the report, and communicated with the other members of the PYD on the progress of the report.

2. ***Artistic Director (Kali Gordon):*** Kali devised a strategy to gather artwork and poetry from Saskatchewan youth, (and added some art of her own) assisted the Executive in choosing appropriate artwork for the report and consulted with the layout assistants regarding the "artistic direction" of the report.

3. ***Public Relations Officer (Devin O'Neal):*** Devin worked with the PYD to choose a release date for the report, contacted the media/other interested parties to inform them of the release of the report, and arranged opportunities for the PYD to present their findings to interested bodies.

4. ***Director of Research (Jessica McFarlane):*** Jessica helped to draft the initial survey, worked with the Executive to decide the contents of the Youth Report, assigned research projects to the rest of the PYD, collected information from the rest of the PYD, and assisted with the final editing of the Youth Report.

The Survey

But how were we going to get information from youth across the province? We brainstormed for a while and finally decided to use a survey approach. The Director of Research (Jessica) led a brainstorming session at the Annual Meeting to guide her drafting of the survey.

Following the meeting, Jessica was given about two weeks to draft a survey and email it to the Youth Coordinator. The draft was then emailed to all CAO staff and all PYD members for their comments. When the comments were compiled, Jessica and the Youth Coordinator worked together to draft a new version of the survey. This version was faxed to contacts over at the Department of Learning: Craig Dotson (Deputy Minister), Rosanne Glass (Director of the Community Education Unit), and Jane Thurgood Sagal (Director of the Humanities Unit). Once the PYD received comments from the Department of Learning, Jessica put the finishing touches on the survey and it was sent to the printers!

Getting Surveys Back...

The Department of Learning graciously volunteered to mail off the surveys to all the high schools in the province through their inter-school mail system. In addition to this, each PYD member was given 20 surveys to hand out, and surveys were sent to: ICFS Agencies, Tribal Councils, Youth in Care Networks, Youth Organizations, and both youth and adult contacts throughout the province.

271 surveys were returned! We received surveys from youth all over the province – right from the far north to the very far south! It was great to read through the filled-out surveys and find out what Saskatchewan youth were thinking about education. All in all, we were very pleased with the responses we received and there are some things we would keep in mind if we were to write another report:

#1: As mentioned earlier, we kept the Department of Learning informed throughout the entire process of making the Youth Report. Because we were unsure of how to go about disseminating surveys into the school system, we were very pleased when the Department of Learning agreed to send out the school surveys for us. However, because we didn't know that we had to notify certain people within the school system before the surveys were sent out we ran into a few problems. For example, if we were to produce another report we would send a copy of the survey along with a brief project outline to ALL the Directors of Education, School Boards, and principals in the province, inviting them to respond to us by a certain date. This way, we could have been assured that everyone was aware of the goals of our project.

#2: One of the PYD members did an outstanding job of handing out surveys. In fact, he convinced his principal to let him hand out a survey to every student in his high school! This was awesome! However, when we looked at the final count of surveys, over 2/3 of the surveys were from one school. To avoid skewing our data, we randomly chose 10% of the surveys from this one school to include with the numerical stats. However, we kept the other surveys to use for quotes or interesting anecdotes.

#3. We valued the voice of youth! We thought that it was imperative that we provide students with ALL the background information on our project. Before they even filled out a survey they all knew WHY we were putting together the report and WHAT we planned on doing with their comments. We also put the name of everyone who filled out a survey into a draw for a free CD player. We then published the winner's name (with their permission) in the Youth Report.

#4. We provided anonymity. We recognized that youth are usually more willing to say what they think when there is no fear of being publicly singled out. We did not want students to think that we were going to use the survey information against them by bringing it to the attention of their teachers and administrators. You will see that only the artists (with their permission) and the PYD have had their names reproduced in the report.

Analyzing Survey Results

Once all the surveys had been collected, the PYD Youth Report Executive met to discuss how to analyze the data and begin drafting the report. Note that even though only the executive was present at this meeting, ALL PYD members received copies of the meeting minutes. At this meeting it was decided that the Youth Coordinator and the Director of Research would analyze the data in time for the next PYD meeting. In addition, even though some preliminary brainstorming was done at the Executive meeting regarding a title for the report and layout options, no final decisions were made until the next PYD meeting.

The PR Event

The PYD had initially planned to release the Youth Report during a socialite luncheon. The PR Director (Devin) put in a lot of time and effort in his initial brainstorm of the event. However, we soon realized that such an event would take a lot of time and money.

We were reluctant to charge for tickets for a couple of reasons: (1) What if nobody came because they didn't want to buy a ticket?; and (2) We didn't want to exclude organizations or youth that may not be able to afford a ticket. In addition, we knew that no one had the time (between school, work and extracurricular activities) to plan such a huge event.

So even though a socialite luncheon was a great idea, we had to put it on the "back burner" and release the report with a press conference at the Legislature in Regina.

The Recommendations

(Note that a complete copy of the recommendations can be found in Appendix A of this document)

All PYD members met several months after the executive meeting to begin brainstorming recommendations for the report. Jessica and the Youth Coordinator had finished analyzing and compiling the data by this time and provided each delegate with a copy of the final stats. The delegates broke themselves off into groups – each group being responsible for a certain number of questions from the questionnaire. After an hour-long brainstorm, each small group reported their conclusions to the larger group. Then, as a large group, we began compiling the main list of recommendations (for "wordsmithing" at a later date). In addition, delegates also pulled out their favorite quotes from each section to aid in the layout of the report.

Delegates also looked over the title options brainstormed by the executive and voted on their favorite. The winner was, *Blueprints for Change: Building Partnership-Based Education*. Now we didn't have to keep calling it "The Youth Report" anymore! At the conclusion of this meeting, the Layout Coordinators were given a copy of both the statistics and the recommendations and promised to begin work on the layout. In addition, both the Layout Coordinators sent a letter to all PYD members listing what was expected of each delegate for the report.

The Layout

Upon receiving the statistics and the recommendations, the Layout Coordinators began brainstorming layout ideas for the Youth Report. They decided to use the title "Blueprints for Change" as a central theme for the report and came up with all kinds of ways to make the report look "blueprinty". After drafting some of the initial layout ideas, the Layout Coordinators worked in consultation with the CAO and the Youth Coordinator to come up with a draft document.

All the PYD received a copy of this document at the next meeting and time to go through the report to give us their honest opinion. A lot of changes were requested! This was good, because it gave us a better idea of what the "group" wanted to see in this report. We also spent some time at this meeting fine-tuning the recommendations. Following the meeting, we redid the layout according to the comments we had received and included the artwork and poetry to decorate the pages. We then printed out the report in colour for each delegate to look over at the Annual Meeting. This was the last time that the PYD as a whole got the chance to see the report before it went to print. However, a final copy was sent to each of the Layout Coordinators before we sent the report in to be printed.

We learned a lot of things from producing this report...

#1. **Designing a report is a creative project that allows you to think outside the box!** But it is also a very time-consuming activity that is too much to expect anyone to do on a volunteer basis when they are going to school, working, etc.

#2. **When you assign tasks to youth, you need to provide a support network.** It was a difficult task for us to figure out the right balance between support and smothering when helping out our Layout Coordinators. All of us learned to not be afraid to ask for help and to communicate openly about our support needs.

The Artwork and Poetry

From the very first meeting, the PYD had insisted that the report be covered with youth art and poetry. However, we were having a bit of trouble with finding Saskatchewan youth art. Even though we had prominently placed our request for art and poetry in the initial survey, we only received one piece of art. So we went to Plan B! The Artistic Director helped to design a poster to send out to youth organizations, and key contacts throughout the province requesting art and poetry. In addition, each PYD member was given a copy of the poster and asked to put it up in their school or community centre.

It took awhile, but eventually the art began to trickle in. We sent a follow-up call to the Youth Art Co-op in Saskatoon and received over a dozen pieces of art by email. We also received a call from a worker at the Kilbuorne Hall Youth Detention Centre in Saskatoon – he invited us up to the centre for a tour of the facilities and provided us with a load of wonderful artwork to include in the report. In addition, some of the PYD members brought artwork to the next meeting.

Now, we had so many pieces of art that we had to choose which ones would appear in the report! The Artistic Director came to Saskatoon for an afternoon and helped the Youth Coordinator choose which pieces of art would appear in the report and where they would be placed. We wanted to choose at least one piece of art from each artist – it was very hard to choose because we had so many wonderful pieces to choose from.

Conclusion

Blueprints for Change was sent to the printers only a little more than a year after its conception. It was a document all the PYD were very proud of – we knew how hard we had worked to collect the data and create the final document. The PYD learned a few things in the process, such as, when a small group of committed people get together they can accomplish anything! Of course, the CAO learned a few things too. Hopefully, you found this document useful – please learn from our successes and mistakes!

Appendix A
The Recommendations

1. SUPPORT! SUPPORT! SUPPORT! Don't forget about those students not excelling academically – don't let them all through the cracks! These students need more support systems in place to make sure that they can graduate successfully.

2. Develop more recreational sports leagues in schools that do not require youth to "make the cut" – put the focus on having fun and building team morale as opposed to winning!

3. Businesses need to create unique vocational and educational opportunities for students, to provide them with applicable skills for the workplace (i.e., mentorship, job shadowing, entrepreneurship)

4. Equal opportunities for schools! (Even if that means sharing resources between schools)
   a. Increase availability of guidance counsellors and addictions services with attention given to equal gender representation

5. Schools need to utilize community resources, including businesses, to increase the variety of available course options and extra-curricular activities for students.

6. Increase post-secondary education preparation
   a. Give support to students not excelling academically
   b. Provide students with ALL their post-secondary options because not everyone wants to go to university!

7. Provide problem resolution training to student to alleviate the added stress on teachers.

8. Consult youth in matters that affect them! (i.e., a student advisory council could be set up when a new school is being built).

9. Create a body independent of the school system where students can voice their concerns
   a) Students need a clear, accessible, and anonymous process to raise issues free from retaliation

10. Increase awareness within schools of the role of the school board
    a. More interaction between trustees and schools
    b. Mutual communication between SRC's and school boards

11. Amend the Education Act to:
    a. Include a youth representative on the board and/or
    b. Create a youth advisory body to which the board is accountable

12. Schools need to put more emphasis on multiculturalism (i.e., host Anti-\ Racism events, or have a cultural fair)

13. Ensure that students enter high school with greater cultural sensitivity and experience
    a. Put emphasis on multicultural programming at the elementary level
    b. Introduce Native Studies classes into the elementary curriculum

14. Implement school/teacher evaluations by students. The issues raised by the students should be carefully considered by the school (i.e., create a youth/adult advisory council for your school to help deal with the issues raised)

15. That the Children's Advocate Office bring forward the recommendations contained in this report to the appropriate provincial government departments or agencies.

Appendix B
The Survey Questions

ARE YOU BETWEEN THE AGES OF 15 AND 21?

BY FILLING OUT THIS FORM YOU COULD HAVE YOUR NAME ENTERED IN A DRAW TO WIN A FREE CD PLAYER!!!!!

[You must complete the questionnaire to qualify]

CHILDREN'S ADVOCATE OFFICE:

Our vision is that the interests and well-being of children and youth are respected and valued in our communities and in government practice, policy and legislation. The Children's Advocate Office (CAO) promotes the interests of, and acts as a voice for, children who have concerns about provincial government services. The CAO engages in public education, works to resolve disputes and conducts independent investigations. The CAO also recommends improvements of programs for children to the government and/or Legislative Assembly.

PROVINCIAL YOUTH DELEGATION:

The Provincial Youth Delegation (PYD) which was founded in 1998, is an initiative of the CAO. The PYD consists of 15 youth between the ages of 15 and 21 from all over Saskatchewan who represent their peers (You!) in government and community life. They make recommendations to government on the needs of youth in Saskatchewan and travel around the province educating Saskatchewan youth on their rights and promoting youth participation. The PYD holds a recruitment campaign every year from February to May – if you would like more information on how to get involved with the PYD please contact the Children's Advocate Office at 1-800-322-7221 or if you live in Saskatoon, call 933-6700.

Your answers to this survey will be confidential – only your age, gender and geographical location will be published! You can fill out the following form to have your name entered into a draw for a CD player. This page will be immediately detached from the remainder of the survey.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

☐ Yes I would like to receive a copy of the finished youth report!

☐ Yes, I would like to be sent an application form for the PYD!

Please note that the information you provide in this survey may be published.

Age: _____ **Location (city or town):**_____ **Male/Female** *(Circle)*

#1. a. Are you currently attending school? (Y/N)_____?
[If no, please answer all the questions as to your last contact with a school]
If no, why did you drop out of school?

_____

_____

b. Have you ever dropped out of school and then returned? (Y/N) _____ If yes, why did you return?

_____

_____

#2. How would you describe how you fit socially in your school and community?

_____

_____

#3. a. Are you involved in any extra-curricular activities in your school? (Y/N)_____
If yes, what types of activities are you involved in?

_____

_____

b. Why did you become involved in these activities?

_____

_____

c. Are there barriers to getting involved in activities at your school? (Y/N)_____
If yes, what are these barriers?

_____

_____

d. What strategies have you used to try to overcome these barriers?

_____

_____

#4. a. What type of support services (ie. Extracurricular activities, counseling services) does your school provide?

_____

_____

b. What other support services would you like to see your school provide?

_____

_____

#5. What are some advantages and disadvantages to the size of your school's student body and to the location of your school?

_____

_____

_____

#6. What do you feel is an appropriate class size?

a. less than 20 b. 20-25 c. 25-30 d. more than 30

What is the average size of your classes? _____

#7. In your school, what are the ways in which you can actively participate in making decisions about your education (ie. SRC, school board rep)? _____

_____

_____

#8. Is your opinion respected by your teachers and administrators? (Y/N) _____

Explain_____

_____

#9. a. Do you feel you understand the role of the school board in your school? (Y/N) _____ Explain_____

_____

b. Do you feel adequately represented by your school board? (Y/N) _____

Explain_____

_____

c. Do you think that a student position on your school board would be a good idea? (Y/N) _____ Why or why not?

_____

_____

#10. Have you ever had to raise a complaint with your teacher, your school, your school board or the department of education? (Y/N) _____If yes, what was the outcome? *(Please refrain from using names)*

_____

_____

#11. Do you feel safe in your school? (Y/N) Explain_____

_____

_____

#12. Do you feel your privacy is respected by the administration and by the other students? (Y/N) _____ Explain

_____

_____

#13. Do you feel that there is discrimination in your school? (Y/N) ____
If yes, who do you feel discriminates and how? *(Please refrain from using names)*

_____

_____

#14. Please name two things you really like about your school.

_____

_____

#15. If you could change one thing about the current education system what would it be?

_____

_____

#16. The PYD is also interested to find out about other interests of Saskatchewan youth. Feel free to comment on any other issue you feel affects Saskatchewan youth of today. *(Please feel free to attach a separate sheet).*

_____

_____

#17. What topic would you like to see the PYD research for their next youth report?

_____

#18. **As a part of this report, the PYD hopes to represent the views of our peers in any creative way they feel like expressing themselves. We are looking for youth who would like to submit poetry, artwork, pictures or other items to be included in the report.**

If you would like to submit something for this report:

- **Send a copy of your submission as we will not be able to return the original.**
- **Ensure that your name, age and town is listed on your submission if you would like your name acknowledged in the report.** *(If you don't want your name in the report we can include your submission anonymously)*
- Send your submission to:
  Attn: Youth Coordinator
  Children's Advocate Office
  315 25th St. E
  Saskatoon SK S7K 2H6
- Deadline is **November 30, 2002**

Note: By submitting your material, you are granting permission to the PYD/CAO to publish the material. You will not be provided with financial compensation if the material is chosen for publication.